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tribal law, the waku of gawel and the gurrong of mokul would have been the same person; with the wrong marriage a discord is created in the first ascending generation, and sometimes considerable time elapses before a woman is taken in marriage. 582

After marriage a young man usually lives for a short period of varying length with his parents-in-law. After this he may go to his own people and take his wife with him. There is often much protest by the wife when she leaves her parents, but they aid her husband. When a child is born, its parents, if not already with the wife's parents, return there so the grandparents can see the baby. This is only for the first child, although the parents of both the husband and wife are always pleased and anxious to see all the grandchildren. 591 [574]

When a girl leaves her parents for the first time, a younger brother accompanies her (see page 65), a custom called "olokork." (The sister's husband is also dué to her young brother, just as this younger brother is galle to his sister's dué.) The husband looks out for the younger man and assumes the place of a father to him during his residence there. 591 607

When a child is born the new union is greatly solidified; it now has become a fully developed family, and except for the wife's being stolen by another man there would be little chance of permanent rupture even if she ran away. Tribal sentiment would be against her and her paramour or anyone who might have stolen her. The children would seldom go with her in such a case, and the strong attachment a Murngin mother has for her offspring would force her to come back to them. The writer has recorded several instances of a woman's going through the most difficult privations and risking probable death to return to her children after she had been stolen by a man from another tribe. [152] 851 587 626

If a camp has been ambushed and the men all killed in a general tribal war, the women and children are taken by the conquerors and given as wives to the men who are in the right relationship to them. 727

A man wants as many wives as he can get and still keep his peace with the other males of his clan. The average is about three and a half for middle-aged men; but there is a recorded case of one native with seventeen wives, the majority having been obtained by stealing them or killing their husbands. He also married "wrong." There is a close correlation of having many wives with fighting strength, or with being the son of a man powerful in war who had thereby acquired a large number of women whose brothers would be gawels to 595 554

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595 the son. A dué likes many wives because he tires of cohabiting with
554 one and because such multiplicity creates more sons and daughters, so that he will have more waku, dué, and galle, with stronger bonds between him and them.

513 When in camp a woman sleeps with her back to her husband. If
833 intercourse takes place it is in this position so that no one can be aware of what they are doing.

A dué and galle never copulate during a woman's pregnancy, lest
843 the child be born dead or die early in infancy, the mother's milk being
834 soured by her husband's semen. If a child is born dead the parents are blamed. If a baby dies, the brother and father of the mother criticize
626 their actions throughout the camp in loud voices for her and other members of the tribe to hear. Since sexual intercourse has usually occurred between dué and galle after what they feel should have been the regulated time, they say nothing and do not resent the criticism.

After a child is born the woman and man wait several days before
846 resuming sexual relations. The wife goes through a short ceremony that is both therapeutic and ritualistic. She enters the bush with a female relative such as momo, mari, or mokul bapa, and places some stones on a fire. When these are hot she squats over the fire and the other woman throws water over the stones. The steam is supposed to heal, cleanse and close her uterus and make it small again.

A woman during this period sleeps facing her husband, who does
846 not try to touch her but waits until she turns from him and starts
833 making casual conversation. He realizes then that she wants him. After his first intercourse with his wife following the birth of a child, the husband always rises early and bathes himself. If he did not, he would look like an animal to the other men and feel ashamed before them.[11]

593 A woman gathers the small game, nuts, bulbs, yams, and other
222 vegetable food, as well as all shell food for the family. A man always
462 has first right to the food brought by her. She and her daughters have eaten all they wish while gathering it. A wife usually cooks the food
262 she has brought for her husband. A large part of a family's larder is contributed by the wife. Big game is supplied by the men, who also bring in fish and large sea animals such as turtle, porpoise, dugong and shark.

[11] There is considerable evidence that there is a comparatively strong taboo on sexual relations between man and wife after the man has seen a totem the first time. It is said that the ceremonial leader for the totem would be so angry that he would attempt to spear the culprit.

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of them." This demonstrates clearly the strong bond between these relatives. Sometimes a waku's gawel is not galle to the waku's father except distantly. Obviously, given the above feelings, the gawel-waku relationship adds much to the strength of a clan and at the same time helps prevent trouble between the two groups. 604

If a fight developed, gawel would help waku with the loan of his spears, and, if necessary, by fighting for him. His own sons would also aid his waku, their dué. A waku is taught much of what he knows about fighting and hunting by gawel. If the older man is a magician he also teaches this art to his waku. [868]

Gawel uses waku's property, or vice versa, with the freedom of a brother or father. If gawel's wife is misbehaving, waku tries by indirect threats of death to make her conform to the tribal ideal of conduct. [626]

Sometimes a gawel promises a waku his daughter, the boy makes presents to him for a long period of time, and the gawel then refuses to give him the girl. This means trouble. Strong pressure would usually be put upon the older man to force him to give her to the boy. This might end in an interclan fight, or the waku would probably run away with her. 604 578

Another disappointing situation for waku that occasionally occurs is when a gawel says, "I'll give you the daughters from this wife." The waku makes presents over a period of time, meanwhile watching the woman to see if she is going to bear children. If she is barren or produces only sons he stops making his father-in-law presents and turns his attention to some other gawel. 604 584 431

The Australian aborigine is a most industrious trader. Articles of trade are passed over well-known trade routes for hundreds of miles and through many tribes. The Murngin and their neighbors are no exceptions to this rule. The Ritarngo and the Djinba trade stone spear heads to the seacoast tribes for red ocher and pipe clay, or for wooden spears. Ranga string is exchanged between them, as well as many other articles. The waku-gawel reciprocal is utilized for the trading. All men try to have as many distant waku as they can. Presents are constantly being exchanged between the two, not to acquire material wealth so much as to extend a man's sphere of influence beyond the nearby clans. It pleases a Murngin to have a present sent from a distant people and adds greatly to his social prestige. It also gives him a greater feeling of safety when traveling, to know that he has a waku or gawel with whom he has this trading relationship. Waku and gawel often visit each other and their behavior demonstrates real friendship when they meet. 439 438 604 431 554 574

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764 Two basins symbolic of totem wells are made over the grave by heaping up earth into two separate compartments with channels leading out from them. The wells represented are the dead man's and those of his nati, which means that they belong to both moieties, and both sides of the man's elementary family of orientation are symbolized. These wells are made for both the Yiritja and the Dua kinsmen to eat in. All the men of the nearby clans who are relatives of the dead gather there and eat the food that has been prepared in the camp. If anyone else attempted to eat there it would cause trouble among the near kin.

The putting up of the mast over the grave symbolizes the people telling the departed one a final goodbye. The grave post, in the eyes of the natives, "is just the same as the dead body. It means that you can look at the grave post and remember where the soul has gone." Grave posts are also put up in the camps which are far distant from the grave of the dead. Additional grave posts are erected if a man is felt [554] to be important. Children and women ordinarily would not have more than one grave post erected for them. Sometimes in the case of children no posts are erected. The grave posts of the Dua people are supposed to be symbolic of the two Wawilak sisters.

The grave of a child is usually placed within the main camp. The grave of an older person is usually at the edge of the camp. Sometimes 769 when the people have left a grave and gone to another place a chance 775 visitor who has not heard of the death arrives in the camp and discovers the grave. This makes matters difficult for him because he is liable to be followed and have tricks played on him by the mokoi of the dead person. There is a method, however, of fooling the evil spirit. The man who has been placed in this embarrassing position goes to a nearby tree and makes a small toy spear and spear-thrower and hides his own spears and spear-thrower in the bush. He takes the play spear and spear-thrower to the newly made grave and he addresses the mokoi, "Now don't you follow me. I am going to come back." He puts the spear and spear-thrower on the grave to prove that he will return, since no man would walk around in the bush without his spear-thrower and spears. The man then returns to his own spear and spear-thrower, and the mokoi, who has been fooled, does not follow him.

765 While the grave post is up and before the bones have been exhumed and placed in the hollow log, outsiders are not allowed in the immediate camp of the parents or near relatives of the deceased. At this time the house of the parents is burned, the garma dance is held,

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the bereaved relatives to settle; the later digging up of the bones, the women's carrying them, and the final reburial give ample time for the emotions finally to adjust themselves to this major crisis.

An examination of the kinship structure alone, without any conception of the total social personality or social participation of the former member of the living group, shows that if a man's father-in-law, for example, is taken by death from the social group, part of the social structure of the bereaved man is removed—at least the content of that part of the structure is gone. This forces a considerable readjustment by the living son-in-law, not only to his dead kin but to the dead's other relatives who are also his own. It seems highly likely that the period of mourning corresponds fairly definitely to the period of readjustment of the social structure to this social loss. The best evidence of this is that a baby, particularly a newborn child which has little or no social personality and has not become a part of the social structure, frequently has no ceremony for its burial; the women dig a shallow hole, deposit the body in it, and cover it—and it is quickly forgotten.

The social personality of a woman is less developed than that of a man (she does not participate, for example, in large parts of the ritual or directly in any of the spiritual behavior of the group, et cetera). The ceremonies for her are much less elaborate than those for a man. The ordinary man has less made of his burial than a man renowned for his feats of war, unless he has been killed by a blood feud. The death of an ordinary man by the blood feud organizes the major antagonisms and creates strong solidarities in the surviving group of kinsmen and those of the killer. The man who has participated the most in his social structure—a man, for example, who has been a great fighter, a ceremonial leader of his clan, and powerful in his kinship relations—is the person who has the strongest social bonds and who is mourned for the longest. A very old man is given less time in his mourning ritual than a man in the prime of life because his lateral and ascending kinship bonds are less strong—that is, the relatives who provide these bonds have previously died.

The Murngin Soul in Life and in Death.—Each Murngin man and woman has two souls. One is looked upon as fundamental and real, and is felt to be the true soul, the soul from the heart, while the other is considered a trickster, of little value, and only in a vague way associated with the "true man." The first is the birimbir or warro, and the second is the mokoi or shadow soul. The warro is the totemic well

2: Berndt E-5 (1946-1950) 1955
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ritual occasions. Nevertheless, and notwithstanding their binding ritual and economic obligations, the descent group as such is the only unit to which one may turn to obtain aid which will be given more or less automatically.

As Leach has said (1951:53), "the network of kinship relations embraces a great number of local groups [corporate descent groups] and ties them into a kind of loosely knit political system; but throughout the population so linked there is no strong sense of social solidarity and in some cases there are even wide differences of language [as among the linguistic groups] and culture [not in this case, however] between different parts of the one system." That is to say, the usual characteristics of tribal organization are lacking; and it is for that reason that these people of eastern Arnhem Land belong to what I have called the Wulamba bloc, speaking a number of related dialects of one language which in toto are referred to as Miwoidj.

V. CONCLUSIONS

The Wulamba material carries a number of general theoretical implications. These concern primarily, in this context, the corporate or unilineal descent group. The minimal propositions discussed by Leach (1951:52–53) mainly refer to the question of relationship between wife-givers and wife-receivers, and the differentiation of status. These arguments regarding the relevance of status concepts to the analysis of "bride-price" (i.e., bride-wealth) and dowry have not been followed up to any extent here. The status concepts which do exist in Wulamba social life, and are reflected in their kinship system, are those dependent on seniority and reinforced by ritual and sacred ceremony. Other factors linked with status considerations are the prestige attaching to fighting ability, to proficiency in magic, and to parenthood as such. Status derived from these sources need not coincide with ritual and ceremonial status, nor with status associated with seniority in a descent group or a linguistic group. Nevertheless, discussion of all these features would be relevant in any detailed study of kinship and social organization (see Sharp 1934:418–20). But status dependent on being a "wife-receiver" or "wife-giver" is to my mind not relevant. A man's status is not necessarily derived from or enhanced by his being a "wife-giver." It so happens that the "wife-giver" will be socially "superior" (although the term "superior" has connotations which I do not think are applicable here), but he is possessed of this status whether or not he accedes to the expectation that he will give his daughter to his Sr.S. I admit, however, with Leach, that a more detailed analysis is necessary of the economic aspects of the effects of matrilateral cross-cousin marriage. As he states (1951:45), "the reciprocities of kinship obligation are not merely symbols of alliance, they are also economic transactions, political transactions, charters to rights of domicile and land use."[5]

Leach points out that when Kachin-type marriage (and presumably Wulamba marriage) occurs—i.e., matrilateral cross-cousin marriage—it is part of the political structure. Now this may certainly be the case among the Kachin, or among certain African groups, but is it the case among the Wulamba? Our

7: Berndt E-5 (1946-1950) 1952
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rôle, and the miracle of childbirth is hers alone. Upon that simple but fundamental thesis much of this traditional epic is based.

Woman's participation in the *dua nara* is thus both logical and necessary. Each sex, however, has its own part to play; and the Djanggawul cycle has indicated not only the physical but also the culturally defined ritual differences between men and women.

In this volume, when describing the beliefs and practices associated with the Djanggawul cycle and the performance of *nara* ritual, we have purposely employed the term cult. This does not mean, however, that it is controlled or shared by a select group, the acceptance of members within the order being determined by totemic, clan or linguistic group affinities, by status, prestige or economic position. This is not so. The Djanggawul cult is one of a number existing contemporaneously in this region, each having its own mythology and associated ceremonies. All these cults are in some degree interrelated, and all male members of the society are eligible as active participants. Boys and young men pass automatically through the age-grading ceremonies of the *djunggawon*, *kunapipi* and *ngurlmag*. In addition to these, there are certain revelatory rituals, which are not initiatory. The extent of a man's active participation in the latter, and his eligibility for leadership, depend upon several factors—for example, on his moiety and kinship affiliations, and on whether or not the cult's mythology and ritual belong to his particular linguistic group or clan, and to his father's family. Such factors, however, never operate to debar him altogether, and in many cases his relationship to the cult through his mother's family may have a compensatory effect. The same conditions apply in the case of the major religious cults, the *dua* and *jiritja* moiety *nara*. All men may be accepted as initiands to the *nara* ceremonies, and all may subsequently become neophytes; but the measure of their active participation and leadership depends on the factors mentioned above. Only a *dua* moiety man, belonging to the most powerful *dua* linguistic group and clan, can rise to ceremonial headmanship in the *dua nara*; and here, too, the principle of descent may operate. The writer's main informants in recording and discussing the Djanggawul songs, mythology and so on were *dua* headmen, assisted by other men who were correspondingly 'graded' in the ritual sphere.

Comparison of the myth (Chapter 2) with the Songs reveals certain inconsistencies. These may perhaps stem from the fact that the myth is an over-all sketch of the Djanggawul's journey and adventures; it allows rather more latitude and scope to individual narrators, and does not purport to describe various incidents in any great detail. On the whole, it does agree basically with the Songs; but

137 zones, *rakai*, the corms of the Tall Spike Rush (*Heleocharis*
262 *sphacelata*), to which reference has already been made, form the staple food. At the same time, communal fishing
226 drives—almost the only large scale hunting activity in which
476 men and women work together—are organised. Most other communal enterprises, except those of a ceremonial nature, are carried out by groups of men or of women working
[687] independently. In most cases the actual procedure follows
[554] so closely a traditional pattern that little actual leadership
[602] is required and this is generally accepted as the responsibility of the most senior and experienced of the older men who stand in the correct kinship status to the group in whose territory the hunting "drive" is carried out. Because these methods are traditional and are therefore regarded as a recapitulation of a pattern laid down by the ancestral culture heroes, the leadership is nominal and generally unobtrusive.

592 Each family—the group consisting of a man and his wife or wives and their young children—lives as a separate unit within the camp. It generally makes its own hut, shelter or breakwind according to the season, but the essential thing is that its life is centred around its own fireside, and that each family group cooks its own food, and lives as an independent and self-contained group within the horde. As a rule only one regular meal is eaten in camp. This is at night after the people have returned from the day's hunting.

591 There is no single women's camp, and up to the time of
593 marriage a girl remains with her parents and shares with
883 her mother the work of gathering vegetable food, and of food preparation, the making of bark houses and the getting of wood and water. But in the case of a boy, after commencement of his first initiation rites, at about the age of puberty, he leaves the fireside of his parents and goes to live in the single men's camp.

461 based on the activities of adults, there is no idleness. Even the young men are engaged fully in hunting and fishing activities and work hard, in marked contrast with the conditions in similar groups close to white settlement, where the organisation is breaking down. Neither men nor women are idle for long, and even in camp as they sit around their fires they may be seen to pick up a basket, a fish net, a spear or other weapon, and work at this as they talk, just as they did when they halted at midday to rest and to cook food. Yet there is no feeling of haste, but rather of method, of system and order.

182 461 What are the drives, the incentives, which lie behind all this organisation? Why does it move so smoothly, and what induces these people to work hard, so willingly, without any *apparent* direction, control or authority?

182 461 773 First and foremost, the organisation is based on the traditions laid down by the totemic ancestors and handed down in mythology, in the culture myths which the natives believe to be a history of their own clan ancestors. This provides a charter for all their activities, it gives them a plan, a motive, for their lives, which they believe are a recapitulation of the lives of the clan ancestors, who "showed the [861] way". Each individual is born into this pattern and learns as a child the part he has to play as a unit in the family and 182 clan. But it is not all impersonal, for as a clan member he 461 fits into the kinship network, in which, although his 602 relationship to all the people in his own and neighbouring 554 clans is laid down when he is born, and his behaviour and obligations to these people clearly defined, these acquire a reality, a vital significance, because they are personal and deal with real people. No member of a well-organised society would willingly lag behind in his obligations. On the faithful discharge of these, on his ability to hunt, to bring his con-

9: Thomson E-5 (1935-1943)1949
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tribution of food to the group, to make payments, to give and return presents of food and objects of value, depends his reputation as a man, his prestige, his feeling of success as a human being.

Again, a successful hunter, especially one who has achieved renown in the pursuit of animals that are difficult to kill and which thus acquire a high social value, earns the title of *tjämbait*, while a woman renowned as a food gatherer is *bärtatumoro*. These titles are greatly coveted, and the right to them confers a considerable amount of prestige. If a man is called *tjämbait* to his face he will flush with embarrassment and pleasure, passing it off with a disclaimer, "*ŋärra bordin*", literally, "I am quiet" (non-aggressive), but no man would wish to be stigmatised as *tjämbaitmiru*[17]—without prowess in hunting. It would be an intolerable humiliation, a blow to his pride and prestige, to his sentiments as a successful human being.

I remember often when coming in from the hills after hunting wallaroo and Red Kangaroo, being greeted by a man who would say to me in the curious, stilted, artificial sing-song voice they reserve for these things, "Eh! *Wa'wa tjämbait*!" "Ah! my elder brother *tjämbait*!" "Well done, my brother." That, among a renowned hunting people, who live by the spear, is a proud title.

The kinship pattern is a system of obligations and counter obligations, and even if he is content merely to discharge these to the extent necessary to maintain his prestige, a man must necessarily work hard. To receive gifts of food and other presents which demand return gifts, and not to reciprocate, places a man under an obligation, which to a normal individual is an unbearable blow to his pride.

And these obligations are not confined to members of

[17] *-miru*, suffix meaning without, lacking.

uninitiated because they are endowed with a force called *marr* (*mana*)[18], and large presentations of food and *gerri* are obligatory to all those to whom these *räŋga* have been revealed and who thus share in the solidarity of the group.

Such obligations recur at every stage in each initiation, and following upon each ceremony a man must make a big ceremonial presentation of objects of value, *gerri*, such as fine spears, belts of human hair and especially gifts of the type that are appropriate to the geographical quarter (*kumur*, page 67), within the ceremonial exchange cycle in which his clan territory lies.

If a man comes from a group some distance away, and the occasion is an important one, a dugout canoe (*lippa lippa*) may be presented. This is a big gift and highly valued. It is important to realise that there is no attempt to assess the value of these things but rather to create a feeling of goodwill, to leave behind a good impression, which a man knows will enhance his prestige and react in his favour in future transactions. He knows also that he builds up goodwill by a reputation for generosity and that this in turn may mean that he will be selected as the recipient of the *wärna*, the armlets of opossum fur string or *lindiritj* (Lorikeet's feathers) and other paraphernalia

[18] *Marr* is a kind of spiritual force or "power" very like the Polynesian concept of *mana*, which underlies social and ceremonial life. It occurs in all sacred objects and is the "force" or "power" which makes them dangerous to the uninitiated or profane and a source of strength and "power" to the fully initiated members of the clan or other organisation. *Marr* is not strength or power, danger or sacredness, alone, although it may be each and any of these things. It is the power which makes a *räŋga*, a totemic object, sacred, which makes a dead body dangerous, and which brings good or bad "luck" in hunting. *Marr* is the force which makes a man *tjämbait*, i.e. successful or "lucky" in the pursuit of game.

which are stripped from the *räŋga* and presented to special individuals after the conclusion of the ceremony, and which carry *marr*, confer prestige on the recipient and bring him "good luck" (*tjämbait*) in hunting.

But in any case, failure to discharge the obligations which he incurs at these times would be unthinkable, for a man believes that he is in a state of danger from *marr* (*mana*), and that ritual visitation will follow if he does not propitiate the group concerned. On this account, and because he would suffer in prestige by failure to discharge these obligations, they are not incurred lightly. This was brought home to me vividly in Arnhem Land when Raiwälla of Mildjiŋi clan, a man who was with me for years, and who accompanied me everywhere, asked me not to take him with me when I was invited to *ŋarra* (*märdai'in*) ceremonies. He explained, in some distress, that because of his association with me, he had been invited to attend many more *ŋarra* than would normally have been the case and was incurring thereby obligations to make *tadoit* payments (page 40) of food and *gerri* (material wealth) which he would not be able to discharge. Although the people knew that he was far from his own territory and understood his position, and although they assured him that he need not make any return presentations, he would not accept this. If he had done so he would not only have been in danger from *marr*, which had not been returned with the ceremonial presentation food or *gerri*, but he would have lost face and been placed in a position of inferiority. The urge, the "drive", furnished by these psychological attitudes in a fully organised aboriginal society are more forceful than any material urge. They far outweigh any desire to gain possessions and are the most important motive forces behind much of the hunting, and the organised and sustained work

which goes on. But while these obligations impose a heavy burden, especially upon a young man who must attend a long series of ceremonies with a vista of payments to be met, the ceremonies in turn confer some benefit upon him, although this may be indirect. They carry increased social status and prestige which in turn bring gradual liberation from some of the irksome tabus which influence almost every act of a young man.

Although on these occasions the immediate burden of gathering vegetable food falls on his female relatives, especially upon his mother and sisters, this does not relieve the initiate of his own personal obligations, but rather intensifies them. He must now redouble his efforts in hunting to enable him in turn to supply his women relations with fish, kangaroo, "sugar bag" or wild honey, in order to retain their goodwill. A man's success as a hunter depends not only on his ability to stalk and his skill with the spear but also on his capacity to make, and to maintain in serviceable condition, his hunting weapons, his fishing lines and nets and sometimes also a canoe. So initiation, especially initiation into the jealously-guarded clan totems (*märdai'in*) of the small groups which characterise the social organisation of North-eastern Arnhem Land, with their intense solidarity and quick resentment,[10] sets up a long train of social obligations—each with a definite economic import—each requiring gift and counter gift, and furnishing the motive for work, the urge for production both of food and *gerri*.

[10] Just as generous presentations of *gerri* (material wealth) and *ŋätu* (food) promote goodwill, so tardiness in the discharge of these obligations may lead to avenging expeditions and interclan feuds. A man who is unpopular, or who is notorious for his carelessness in these matters is more likely to be named as the victim when a scapegoat is sought to avenge a death or wrong.

9: Thomson E-5 (1935-1943)1949
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first phrase means "return from hands", i.e. from handling the bones, the second "return from mouth". Payments in each case are made to the other near relatives. This is a ritual act and may be interpreted as a token "payment" or gesture in formal expiation of an infringement of the solidarity (the *marr*) of a group, members of which are bound together by the sharing of a special bond.

In the case of the ceremonial revelation of the jealously-guarded sacred totemic objects of the clans, with their intense solidarity, it was pointed out that the reciprocal gifts required are substantial and exacting, and I have shown that a considerable amount of organisation is required to enable a man to discharge these obligations.

But it must be remembered that there is also another side to these transactions to which reference has already been made, and that a man not only gains greatly in prestige and social status, and increases the scope of the ceremonial exchange cycle in which every individual of standing plays a part, but above all, the *marr* or "spiritual power" from the successful conduct of these reacts directly upon all his other activities. It assists him in hunting and brings him "good luck" (*tjämbait*) and as has been stated, it adds to his prestige, his social status.

A graphic illustration of the belief in the spiritual power which reposes in the sacred *räŋga*, occurred while I was living with these people. Immediately after the revelation of the *räŋga*, a ceremony associated with the sun totem of a clan called Maräŋo, a young man went out turtle hunting in his canoe, and returned with four turtles. The old men credited the success of the expedition to "good luck" (*tjämbait*) and claimed that the "body", really the "skin" (*kälŋa*) of the young man was still covered with

9: Thomson E-5 (1935-1943)1949
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in-law), and with the particular *kauwäl* (mother's brother) who is the husband of this woman to whom he applies the term *mukul*. Before the potential mother-in-law has a daughter, even before she is pregnant, he may begin to send her gifts of food. These progressive gifts have a cumulative effect and build up goodwill. They are divided into two series, to each of which a special name is applied. The first series are *milmarr*, while those given to the mother-in-law after the birth of a daughter are known by a different term, *mundur*. As my informant said, "that is hard work for me; she pays me back," i.e. by giving her daughter to me in marriage. They believe that this special form of giving has more than a "goodwill" effect, and that *marr*, the spiritual force or power to which I have referred, goes with the food, so that it has a greater significance than the white man would attach to it—and much greater than its mere value as food. The same applies to the special ceremonial gifts of food and *gerri* which are presented by the novitiate at various stages during his initiation to clan totems and to other cults. Implicit in this form of giving is the feeling which is even more important than "goodwill", that it places the recipient under an obligation to repay. To remain under such a debt is to accept a feeling of inferiority, of shame and humiliation.

In discussing the "drive", the urge to carry out the exacting hard work (which in a fully organised aboriginal society is everywhere in evidence) I have stressed the obligation which a man feels to reciprocate with a gift of at

toward *mukul rumaro* is one of rigid avoidance. He may not speak to her nor she to him, but he has very definite obligations towards her (*mukul rumaro*), including the obligation to provide her with certain animal food, with progressive gifts of a special type described above.

182 least equal, or if possible greater value, in order to maintain
431 his social status and to enhance his prestige. He achieves
461 this by his capacity to reciprocate a gift quickly and gener-
554 ously. If he failed to meet the obligations imposed, for
626 example by the kinship pattern, he would lose face, prestige, in his group. It will be evident that this feeling of shame and humiliation at failure to reciprocate a gift or to honour an obligation, apart altogether from any danger of incurring resentment and visitation by evil magic, furnishes one of the most powerful mechanisms which underlie the production of food and goods, and the circulation of these. This is well shown by an example given to me by my informants, which illustrates the use which can be made of this fact
262 to gain a desired objective. While a boy is still regarded as
562 a child, there is no tabu even for his sisters upon eating the
784 food that he may capture. But immediately after the circumcision ceremony, when his social status is altered and he lives apart from his mother and father in the single men's camp, the food collected or killed by a boy becomes tabu to relations of certain orders, and is now known by a special name, *kälŋboi* (*vide* page 21).

262 The eating of all *kälŋboi* food is surrounded by tabus,
431 even for those relatives who are permitted to partake of it at
784 all. For "outside" or "distant" relatives under the kinship sys-
606 tem to eat this *kälŋboi* food is a special privilege, but the
584 obligation to make ceremonial return payments, again of the type called *tadoit*, is always present. *Kälŋboi* food may sometimes be used to ingratiate a young man with a woman who stands in the relationship of potential mother-in-law (*mukul rumaro*) to him, but whose daughter has already been promised (*wawun*) to another man some distance away. At first the *mukul rumaro* may refuse the *kälŋboi* food, but under coercion she may at length accept it, and

to, or association with, a totemic ancestor or a clan totem. 435

In the second category fall all things ordinary, non-sacred, 778 called *wäkkinŋu*, which in its literal translation means rubbishy, uncouth, outlandish, but is used also to denote merely the category of the non-sacred or "profane" in contrast with *yarkomirri*.

The first category, which comprises objects called *märdai'*- 778 *inboi* or *yarkomirri*, includes such things as the fine cere- [431] monial armlets made from material which has been removed from the actual totem after the *ŋarra* ceremony, and sent as gifts to friends in other clans. In addition, it includes all weapons and implements, such as canoe-paddles, certain spears, baskets of special type, and smoking pipes which carry the *mintji*, the special totemic patterns of the clan, to one of the totems of which they have been dedicated. This 778 dedication may take the form merely of the giving of the [552] sacred name, after which the object becomes *yarkomirri*, 784 or it may constitute a more elaborate ceremony in which 431 the *dälkärramirri*—the "caller of big names"—in his capacity of high priest, calls ceremonially over the object, the sacred *därrpäl* (hidden) names of the appropriate totem, thereby consecrating it. Thenceforth it becomes sacred. It is "*yarkomirri*". If it is a spear, game killed with it becomes *duyu* (tabu), if a canoe paddle, all food taken from the canoe propelled by the paddle is also tabu. Its chief attribute is that it possesses *marr*, spiritual power derived from the totem or totemic ancestor whose name it bears. Its use is prohibited to all but fully initiated men of the particular clan (or associated group of clans) from which it came, and in the case of the special, sacred *mintji* or painted designs, may not even be looked upon by profane eyes. To 431 possess these objects carries prestige, and their *marr* imparts [554] power and strength as well as *tjämbait*—hunting prowess, 777 778

Not every man is skilled in weaving *bäti* (baskets), of which many types are recognised, each with its own name and each made for a specific purpose. A man with special skill in weaving becomes known, but he is called merely *koŋ mainmäk*, a "good hand". Such a man may acquire some local renown and receive substantial payments (*baka bäkmärämma*) in return for his work, but again, this is a tribute to, and an acknowledgement of, the *marr* of the master craftsman, the prestige he brings, rather than "payment" for his activities, his craftsmanship. But it shows the beginnings of the recognition of craft specialisation, the *virtu* of special skill in craftsmanship.

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But in the case of the *lippa lippa*, the wooden dugout canoes, which may exceed 24 feet in length and may be capable of carrying upwards of six to eight men on sailing

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to use these stingray spines is the prerogative of these clans only and is jealously guarded.

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Again, the fine appearance and balance of a spear is not always a gauge of its worth. I once remarked to an informant, Raiwälla, of a spear shaft, that it was crooked and twisted, and the spear not of much value. But he corrected me quickly and pointed out that as the shaft was crooked the spear was not "flash" and was therefore more likely to fly straight to its mark. Such a remark is enlightening, because it stresses at once the great difference in the way in which the white man and the Arnhemlander look at even so simple an artefact as a spear. To the white man, a wooden shaft is of good or indifferent craftsmanship, but the native attributes personality to it. Its very appearance may be deceptive. It may possess *marr* from its background and association. For this reason a native may place great value upon spears received within the ceremonial exchange cycle, from areas renowned for weapons of a certain type, although to the eye of the white man they may appear to be inferior to those which he makes for himself. The native recognises the prestige (the *marr*) of the master craftsman. By their associations certain *gerri* possess *marr*, and they have therefore a vastly enhanced *psychological* value as fighting or hunting weapons.

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431 (2) *Kumur muadäk* comprises calico, tobacco, blankets,
[177 glass (the latter used for scrapers and highly valued in the
439] making of spears and other weapons), tomahawks, knives,
belts, smoking pipes and other *gerri* of the type which are
said formerly to have been obtained from the Macassars.
[182 To fill the demand for *wetj* (page 78), and under the incessant
554] obligations of the ceremonial exchange system, these *gerri*
are passed quickly to the southward—not so much under
the urge for economic barter, as to fulfil obligations set
up by the ceremonial exchange cycle and to gain the
prestige, which the ability to send *gerri* of this order confers
on the sender. For, while it will be seen that this fulfils a
definite economic function, its basis is primarily ceremonial.

(3) *Kumur kätjirk*. A series of very characteristic *gerri*,
some of which differ considerably from those made in

[177 of the Macassar voyagers which brought iron to Arnhem Land long
[182 before, it was known in what later became the settled country of
431 the Roper River.
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The most interesting feature of this southern movement of spears is the fact that, today, when the position is reversed and when iron is relatively scarce and difficult to obtain in Arnhem Land in contrast with its abundance in the settled country of the Roper River valley, the passage of fine iron spear heads from Blue Mud Bay, which was developed under the impetus of the ceremonial exchange cycle, stimulated by the coming of the Macassar voyagers, still continues, although the practical need for it, the demand for iron spear heads for actual use in the Roper River area, must have passed, or at least must have been much reduced. The fact that the *economic* need which it served has passed, stresses once more the strength of the *ceremonial aspect* of the *kumur märndu* exchange cycle.
[572 It must be remembered that partners within the ceremonial exchange cycle exist of such long standing that they have even become hereditary. These people send *gerri*, and these must be reciprocated with presents of the type long established by tradition, whether they seem appropriate or not.

9: Thomson E-5 (1935-1943)1949
OI17 Murngin OI17

FROM THE SOCIAL STANDPOINT THE CONSTANT
flow of *muadäk* from the Macassar visitors enabled a man 182 431 439 C55-47
of this area to discharge his obligations to those from whom he had received *gerri*, and to maintain and to build up his prestige. From the economic point of view it had the effect of stimulating the circulation of *gerri*, of maintaining a balanced exchange of goods, under cover of what, to the natives, is the vastly more important social and ceremonial relationship.

The orientation of the ceremonial exchange system as it 177 182 431
still operates, with the emphasis on the "approved" or traditional *gerri* in each *kumur*, leaves no doubt as to the impetus which the coming of the Indonesians gave to the culture of this area. The people of the coast, who in former times came into direct contact with the Macassar visitors—and in more recent times, with trepang fishermen and casual seafarers—and who have provided the iron, nails, and bottles (for glass scrapers, etc.) for their exchange partners, are named from the special *gerri*, known collectively as *muadäk*, which they send as reciprocal gifts to their partners in the south.

It is not proposed to deal at length with the ceremonial aspect of this infiltration, and a single reference will suffice to show the effect on ceremonial life, which gives weight to the data which has been recorded, and of the value placed upon the *gerri* which were brought by the Macassar seafarers, as well as the effect of this on economic and social life.

The Mildjiŋi clan of the Glyde River has not only come 177 strongly under the influence of these Indonesian people, 431 but among other traits, has adopted a square-faced bottle, 532 called *butulo*, and has elevated it to the level of a clan totem. 778 Today the *mälli*, the representation, "the shade", the non-material representation or effigy of this bottle, is carved laboriously from solid ironwood, and is painted with a

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[224 789] on the eyes, cheeks and arm of a hunter to make him alert and far-seeing—*mel karrkuluk*—and so to aid him in sighting and approaching game that is difficult to kill, [554] success with which brings prestige to a hunter. The blood drawn by a *ragalk* from his victim, or the flesh taken from [778] the body of a man whose death has been brought about by a sorcerer, has special potency in magic. It is regarded as dangerous, *duya*—tabu in a ritual sense by virtue of its *marr*—*marr dal* (*marr*, spiritual power, *dal*, strong). It must therefore be eaten only with due observance of ritual precautions. In the case of a young man or uninitiated boy, human flesh, particularly flesh from the victim of a *kalka*, may be given to him only by an old man who first applies [789 784] his own axillary sweat to the mouth, face and throat of the novice so that he will not become sick, and thus ensures that he receives the benefit of the *marr* without the danger that he would otherwise incur. On no account may a boy or a young man touch this flesh or blood with his own hands.

774 754 Meanwhile the victim of the *kalka* lies unconscious and is declared by the natives to be dead. They say that his *malli*—his ghost—remains with the body, but that his *birimbir* departs. The *birimbir* is very near to our idea of the soul. It resides originally with the *malli ranga*, the spirit or spirit-manifestation of the totem which remains always in the *wangarr kapu manotji*, the totemic well or water hole where it swam until it entered the mother's body at conception. When the *birimbir* leaves the body of the victim of the *kalka*, my informants said that it returned to the *kapu manotji*. And they added: 'All same he die.' It is as if the man has died. For when a man dies his *birimbir* returns as described above, to the *kapu manotji* from which it came and swims there until it is again reincarnated.

754 278 824 The *kalka* now proceeds to restore his victim to life. He takes a white stone from his dilly bag. First he rubs on the body the mucilage of an orchid called *djalkurk*, *Dendrobium dicuphum*, and then warms the stone, which he places on the sore—*tji'tji*—or on the victim's chest. He warms the stone again and now places it on the *maiyang* (throat) and chest. Then he draws the skin back into place, heats the stone again and places it on his victim's cheeks, supplementing the stone with the blade of his *mangal*—spear-thrower. My informants said that the penis of the victim is erect, the tongue hanging out and the bowel prolapsed, and each of these organs has to be treated and replaced in position. Sometimes one of the *kalka* will climb a nearby tree and break down the leafy nest of a green tree ant (*Œcophylla virescens*)—which exudes a strong, pungent odour of formic acid and is believed by the natives to have some therapeutic value. The *kalka* scatters these ants over the prolapsed intestine, which my informant declared to be effective in causing it to retract.

754 It was a matter of surprise to me to find a number of men who were in possession of the *kandjurma*, which are the stock-in-trade of the *ragalk*, admitted to membership of the cult, and were even willing to demonstrate to me their technique in dealing with a victim.

The natives do not pretend that a man subjected to treatment by *kalka* in the manner described is afterwards

15:Chaseling M-5 (ca. 1934-1936)1957
O117 Murngin O117

CHAPTER EIGHT

Family Life in the Jungle

A FAMILY is the most important unit in aboriginal society, and the horde is founded on it. Some families have as few as three members; the largest I saw was that in which Wonggu had twenty-six wives and fifty children. A horde consists of a father's family and his sons' families, and if a few generations of sons escape their enemies' spears the horde is a large one. Upon this simple horde-family relationship depends the entire intricate, bewildering, and far-reaching aboriginal social organization.

Polygamy is an ancient custom and has an economic basis, for women are the chief food-gatherers and are coveted as assets and never regarded as expensive luxuries. A man cannot foresee the number of wives he is to have, but he hopes for several, and as his influence increases there is a tendency to bestow women on him. Bestowal of women is so arranged that old men obtain young wives and young men generally receive old widows, and incongruous as the arrangement may seem to us it ensures that old men have active women to hunt for them and their elderly wives, and that the young men, well able to look after themselves, make do with elderly widows. Prestige lies with the old men, and they enforce the practice despite constant objections from both the young men and the young women. As youths grow older their authority increases and they in turn bargain for young women.

Women live a much harder life than men, and are neglected and unwanted as they grow old before their time;